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ABSTRACT

This brief paper discusses how in 10 year's time a system for providing caregiver training was developed in Texas. The training accessibility system consists of five dimensions: publications, free materials, resource rooms, child development specialists, Title XX training contracts and traveling resource vans. Tips for program continuity under conditions of funding uncertainty are provided. (Author/RH)

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ABSTRACT

A Multi-level Approach to Caregivers Training Accessibility

This accessibility system has five levels:

1. Texas Child Care Quarterly - available free to anyone who cares for children (in and out of the state). It is routinely sent to every licensed center, day home, 24-hour institution and registered day home.

2. Available free upon request (to Texas caregivers) are 64 different publications related to day care and child development.

3. Resource Rooms throughout the state are accessible to caregivers. These Resource Rooms contain books, equipment, self-paced instructional materials, and free printed resources.

4. Title 20 providers have available: the services of a traveling resource van "Sharemobile." These vans deliver on-site training particular to the needs of the center staff or day mother.

5. Title 20 providers have available: training provided through courses at post-secondary institutions. These courses are designed to meet the expressed needs of the providers.

These five levels of training accessibility make it possible: to offer a baseline of information to all providers via level 1. To others who are interested, levels 2 and 3 are available. Due to funding limits/state and federal regulations, levels 4 and 5 are for Title 20 only.

This system, however, can be duplicated with little difficulty. In fact, in many areas parts of the system now exist. This paper discusses how the system evolved and how anyone can build on what they currently have to develop a similar multi-level approach to caregiver training.

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A Multi-Level Approach to Caregiver Training Accessibility

Diana Range

The Texas Department of Human Resources Child Development program has a long term goal-the promotion of excellence in child care through leadership without domination. One way we try to meet that goal is through our multi-access system to caregiver training.

Over the last 10 years the department has carefully built a comprehensive training system that we believe can be duplicated in other states, cities or universities. The system can be simplified or made much more complex.

Brief History - A 10-Year Perspective

Ten years ago the state hired a consultant for day care. She provided training to all Title XX day care centers, and wrote the Texas Day Care Newsletter that went to all licensed day care centers. During that first year she wrote and the Department published Tires Are Tools for Learning. From that point, the program has grown until now there are 43 Child Development Specialists, a magazine (Texas Child Care Quarterly) with a circulation of 36,000 which goes all over the world, 140 different publications and audio visuals, 10 operating mobile resource vans for delivering contracted training and technical assistance and 26 training contracts that have trained 72,000 people in the last year. (duplicated count)

Implied in all those numbers is our multi-level plan for caregiver training, which we believe helps us meet our goal.

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The first level of training is our magazine Texas Child Care Quarterly. Before 1977 it was called the Texas Day Care Newsletter. The Quarterly is divided into two sections. The front half of the magazine contains articles, and the second half of the magazine contains program activity ideas. This year we conducted an evaluation of the magazine, part of which was a reader survey. The results showed that both sections of the magazine were equally read and used. The survey further showed that the magazine was passed on to three times the number of people who receive it. From this number we project that over 140,000 people have an opportunity to read and use the information provided in the magazine.

From its beginning it has been paid for by state funds, sent without cost to all licensed child care providers in the state of Texas. Over the years circulation to non-direct caregivers (university teachers, nurses, social workers, libraries) and out-of-state subscribers has increased substantially.

Next year for the first time all out-of-state and non-caregiver requests for the Quarterly will have to pay for the magazine.

The second level of accessible training are our printed and audio-visual materials. From 1970 through June of 1978 all of our printed materials (30 books, 35 pamphlets) were available at no cost, and sent upon request. Since June 1980 only Texas caregivers have been able to receive our publications at no cost, out-of-state and non-caregivers orders must be paid for at replacement cost only.

Last year 8,500 publications were sent to caregivers, some were free, some were purchased.

In addition to our publications, we have 77 slide presentations that are available. Because they are expensive to reproduce, we have not been able to offer them free to anyone. Even Texas residents must pay the reproduction cost.

Where did the money come from? And how do you keep it going? Those are questions I know you are wanting the answers to. In the beginning the amount of money spent to produce and print the publications was slight because it was all done inside our agency. In 1975 the Texas Legislature gave our Department a sizable allocation to provide additional training to caregivers to fulfill a portion of the new Day Care Licensing Act. We used part of the money to produce and print many new materials. We always print in large quantities so we will have an abundant supply and it reduces the cost per item.

In 1977 our legislature chose not to re-fund the program which provided training to all licensed providers. Since that time we have produced one major resource annually. Getting development money is slightly more tricky now. At the beginning of each fiscal year we submit our request for the amount of money we estimate will be needed to complete the proposed project. Sometimes we get it, sometimes we get a part, and other times we get none. However the funding request turns out, we are always prepared to begin a project. We always have two or more projects in mind, with more than an outline - in other words we have the beginning development done -

a structure with some substance. We have read, researched and located a number of authorities on that particular subject.

No matter what funding we have received at the first of the fiscal year, during the third quarter there is generally a surplus of funds (contracts, staff, etc., did not use all money budgeted). We are able then to show a use for the funds and because we have already done the preliminary work, need very little start up time. Many of our more recent materials have been developed this way.

These first two levels of accessible training are available at no cost to all Texas caregivers. Out-of-state or non-direct delivery staff must purchase the training materials. This plan, while not a guarantee that all caregivers will receive and benefit from the materials, at least sets up a system whereby they have ready access to them.

The next three levels of accessible training are for facilities that receive Title XX funds.

The third level are state paid CDS's. Across the state there are 43 Child Development Specialists which have as a primary responsibility the provision of training and technical assistance to all centers and day homes that receive Title XX funds. The number of child development specialists has grown or decreased in proportion to our level of funding. For the last several years the number has remained approximately the same. Child Development Specialists have other responsibilities; monitoring quality of care, and in some regions contract management.

Child development specialists provide or facilitate the provision of training for any topic the providers may need.

The fourth level of accessible training are Title XX training contracts. Seventy-five percent (12) are individual training components for large multi-facility Title XX day care agencies. In those contracts only staff of the particular agency may participate. These contracts free child development specialists to work with other centers. The child development specialist reviews these training components and monitors them to assure training goals are met.

The remaining 25% (4) training contracts fund the operation of resource rooms and large group training sessions. Often these resources rooms are located in our own facilities, the funds are used for staff, supplies, and equipment. The resource rooms vary in sophistication and detail of services offered. In general, they have books, records, toys and equipment for loan. Some have areas where materials can be made. Others have self-teaching self-paced instructional modules. Some offer one-on-one training. The services vary according to need and available funding. The resource rooms are available for Title XX caregivers only. They may be, however, also used by our own protective, WIN and licensing staff.

The number of training contracts that the state has is of course dependent upon our level of funding. When more money is available, we have more contracts. But during lean times we plan and wait.

The fifth level of accessible training are our 10 operating mobile resource vans (Sharemobiles). At one time 16 were operating, however, our limited funds do not allow us that luxury now. The vans go to centers or day homes to provide specialized/individualized training and also to a limited degree provides a small resource book lending library. The vans were initially purchased thru a grant by Levi-Strauss and supplied with additional funds provided by the state. A recent evaluation of this program indicated that 98% of the caregivers who have received training via the sharemobiles believe their skills were enhanced. The overall impression of the evaluation was that the sharemobile services, because they were so personalized, were able to effect change in areas where it had not been done before. There was a 22% decrease in the incidents of standard violations after the sharemobile training had been establisned.

As I mentioned earlier, the last three levels of training are available only to those facilities that receive Title XX funds, but if you choose to use this model for training your scope of participants could be very different depending on your funding source.

Last year levels III, IV, & V were responsible for delivering 27,586 training sessions (combination of individual & group). These sessions accounted for 71,741 staff receiving training (many received multiple amounts of training so that is a duplicated count). Even though that is a duplicated count, it is still quite large. (Example 71,741 ÷ 12 hours required per year for licensing = 5,979.)

Last year in level I-3 times as many people read the Quarterly than

received it so approximately 140,000 had access to it. And in level II almost 9,000 (8,710) received our printed and audio-visual resources. These numbers may be duplicated counts since all have equal access to these training resources. A composite number for those who have had exposure to one or more levels of our training is 221,000 staff. It is possible that one person could have access to five levels of training, but minimally everyone has access to two.

We believe the structuring of our training availability has made a significant impact on the daily care of children and further believe that our system can work in other states with some modification.

I started this presentation with our long term goal, "the promotion of excellent child care through leadership without domination." I hope that when you go back home you will adopt a similar goal if you do not yet have one, and consider a multi-level approach to training as one way to meet that goal.